

REMARKS:

This application has been carefully studied and amended in view of the Office Action dated March 20, 2007. Reconsideration of that action is requested in view of the following.

The Abstract of the Disclosure has been amended as suggested by Examiner Manoharan.

Reconsideration is respectfully requested of the conclusion that the references cited in the Search Report were not provided in a separate Information Disclosure Statement. When the present application was filed such an Information Disclosure Statement was, in fact, included, but may have been misplaced at the PTO. Attached is a copy of the Information Disclosure Statement that was submitted with the filing of this application. Also enclosed is a copy of the return postcard referring to this application by the Serial Number and Filing Date which was stamped at the PTO. The documents listed as having been filed include "Information Disclosure Statement, SB08, with references". In any event, to assure that the references are listed, attached hereto is a further Information Disclosure Statement.

Page 4, of the Specification has been amended to include a heading with regard to the drawings. A further heading has been added for the detailed description.

The claims have been carefully reviewed in view of the rejection under 35 USC 112. In that regard, claims 1-8 have been

replaced by newly added claims 9-16 which are based upon the rejected claims but have been modified to take into account the objections made to the rejected claims. In that respect, it is noted that parent claim 9, which replaces former claim 1 recites the separation steps in terms of active steps. It is also noted that in the preamble of claim 9 the term "which is obtained in the preparation of methylamines by gas-phase reaction of methanol and ammonia and which comprises monomethylamine, dimethylamine, trimethylamine, ammonia and methanol as components" is only a characterization of the product stream which is separated in the process according to the invention. The term "pure" has been deleted. This finds its basis in the description on page 4, line 34. The meaning of the term "pure" as in "pure distillation" was intended to describe that ammonia is separated off by distillation only without process steps besides distillation.

Further, the term "the feed" which is referred to in claim 12 (former claim 4) is initially recited in parent claim 9 which thereby provides antecedent support for that term in claim 12.

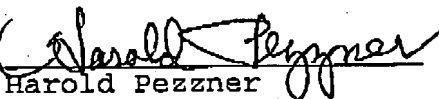
In addition, the term "wherein alkali metal hydroxide is added to the second or third column" is specified by the term "to prevent corrosion". According to the invention, it is possible to add the alkali metal hydroxide to the second column as well as to the third column. Both the feeding to the second column and

the feeding to the third column lead to the same result, i.e., in both cases, corrosion of the columns is avoided.

The indication that the claims would be allowable if rewritten or amended to overcome the rejections under 35 USC 112 is noted with appreciation. Every effort has been made to overcome these rejections by the rewriting of claims 1-8 and their presentment as claims 9-16. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that this application should be passed to issue.

Respectfully Submitted,

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